

EDITORIAL.

WITH THIS NUMBER the GAZETTE completes its second decade. Beginning in a very small way, with no assurance of success or special reason for it, it seemed to meet a current need and American botanists accepted it as a convenience. Its birth happened to be timely, for it was just before what may be styled the renaissance of American botany, and it shared in the development of its subject. As a consequence, it has become not merely a convenience but a necessity to American botanists. Looking through its twenty volumes one sees that all our botanists have written for it, from Gray and Engelmann down through the lengthening and still living list. It therefore represents well the history of American botany for twenty years. At first finding it difficult to fill its few pages with worthy material, its recent large volumes have been kept within bounds only by careful selection. At first necessarily confined to the region of systematic botany, it seeks now to represent all the multiplying fields of work.

ONE UNFORTUNATE THING in the history of the GAZETTE has been the unavoidable changes in the office of publication. From Hanover to Crawfordsville, Bloomington, and now Madison, it represents the usual shiftings in the experience of western college men, and seems to deserve the characterization of "this migratory publication" given by Jackson in his "Guide," who, by the way, confused places of printing with offices of publication. But it has been fortunate enough in its long continued editorial service to offset the change in its local habitation, and to give it that consistent purpose which makes for development. It has sometimes been remarked that in this development the more formal papers have crowded out those small notes and scraps of information which made the older numbers interesting and useful to many. If this be true, it has come about through failure to receive such material even with constant urging. The departments of "Briefer Articles," "Open Letters," and "Notes and News," all have in view such items as once constituted the whole of the GAZETTE. We have heard that, as a rule, botanists read the GAZETTE in oriental fashion, beginning with the last pages and working through toward the first, and it is far from the intention of its editors to eliminate the more transient and more immediately interesting records of botanical activity.

THIS WRITING is more by way of reminiscence than of promise, but it is proper to refer to the future. In the present condition of botany,

to continue in the same way is to retrograde. The GAZETTE proposes to continue its development with the growth of the science and to be a worthy reflex of botanical activity. This will doubtless involve changes in size, in presentation, perhaps in departments. To maintain a strictly scientific journal of high character as a private enterprise has always proved to be difficult, and the fact that the GAZETTE has maintained itself for twenty years and has developed so rapidly testifies both to the devotion of its editors and to the loyal support of botanists. The editors wish that they could do more for less money, but the botanists whom they serve must be asked to share the financial burden. This will explain the gradual increase in subscription price, an increase not at all commensurate with the increase in the scientific value of the journal.

IN CLOSING its twentieth volume, therefore, the GAZETTE assures its readers that still more vigorous effort to make the journal what it should be will testify to waxing rather than waning strength.

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PAINFUL NEWS has just been received of the death of Mr. M. S. Bebb, our well-known authority on the willows. Mr. Bebb died in San Bernardino, California, whither he had gone only November 2d in hope of recovery. A biographical sketch and portrait will appear later.